

Sample Response

20 marks

Introduction

M.T. Anderson's *Feed* masterfully interweaves ideas, form, and language to deliver a potent critique of consumerism and technological dominance. Through its dystopian narrative, Anderson not only exposes the erosion of individuality and critical thought but also underscores the consequences of passive societal acceptance. The connections between *Feed*'s thematic exploration, fragmented structure, and distinct use of language deepen its resonance as a cautionary tale, compelling readers to reflect on the implications of their own interactions with media and technology.

Consumerism and Its Consequences

Anderson's portrayal of relentless consumerism in *Feed* unveils its corrosive impact on personal autonomy and societal values. Through Titus's realisation—"It was like I kept buying these things to be cool, but cool was always flying just ahead of me, and I could never exactly catch up"—Anderson employs **metaphor** to emphasise the unattainable pursuit of consumer validation. This line encapsulates the perpetual dissatisfaction inherent in consumer culture, illustrating how identities become entangled in an endless cycle of consumption. The novel's **satirical** form, saturated with feedcasts and ads such as "Everything must go! Mega-Riot Gear Sale!" reflects the omnipresent bombardment of advertising that mirrors modern digital experiences, revealing how consumer culture distracts and numbs its participants. The **motif** of lesions as fashion statements exemplifies the superficiality promoted by the feed. Phrases like, "Now that lesions are 'brag.' Now that they're the spit. It's huge," convey the absurd prioritisation of appearance over well-being. Anderson's use of **irony** in these depictions serves to critique society's skewed values, portraying how consumerism distorts perceptions of beauty and health. The recurring theme of commodification is reinforced by the use of **colloquial dialogue**, with characters frequently speaking in fragmented, **trivial language** "Like, it was so meg you wouldn't believe it." Anderson's integration of **satire** and **symbolic language** compels readers to confront the true cost of a consumer-driven existence, where the relentless pursuit of novelty masks deeper societal issues. This connection between form, ideas, and language underscores the text's significance as a mirror to contemporary culture, warning against the perils of prioritising material gain over authentic human engagement.

Resistance and Its Consequences

The theme of resistance in *Feed* highlights the necessity and cost of preserving individuality in a conformist society. Violet's defiance is captured in her declaration, "I'm not going to let them catalog me. I'm going to become invisible." The use of **metaphor** here reflects her determination to evade the invasive reach of corporate surveillance capitalism, embodying the fight for autonomy in a world defined by control. This act of resistance is contrasted with Titus's apathy and passivity, reinforcing how the majority of society succumbs to the feed's influence without question. Anderson uses **irony** to reveal the consequences of rebellion. Despite Violet's critical perspective and articulate speech, her physical decline underscores the devastating cost of challenging the system. The **paradox** within her life—an individual striving for freedom yet unable to escape the consequences—amplifies the novel's message about the personal sacrifices involved in resisting conformity. Titus's conflicted response to Violet's struggles is encapsulated in his reflection: "The only thing worse than the thought it may all come tumbling down is the thought that we may go on like this forever." This **paradox** illustrates the cognitive dissonance faced by those aware of their complicity but too entrenched to act. Through first-person narration, Anderson provides insight into Titus's internal conflict, presenting him as both a product of and potential challenger to the feed's influence. The **juxtaposition** of his simplistic language with Violet's nuanced speech serves as a critical technique that highlights the disparity between those who conform and those who question. This narrative choice magnifies the emotional stakes of resistance, showing that true autonomy requires more than awareness—it demands resilience and courage. By illustrating the consequences of resistance through Violet's plight and Titus's hesitancy, Anderson not only elucidates the significance of challenging conformity but also compels readers to reflect on their own role in accepting or resisting societal norms. This layered portrayal enriches the text's exploration of individual autonomy and the societal cost of conformity.

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Body Paragraph 3: Language and Communication

Anderson's manipulation of language in *Feed* exposes the degradation of communication and thought in a technologically saturated world. The novel's **fragmented dialogue**—"This so big sucks"—exemplifies the **superficial**, truncated nature of speech shaped by the feed. This choice of **colloquial language** reflects a society where deep conversation is replaced by mindless chatter, mirroring the way modern social media platforms encourage rapid, shallow exchanges over meaningful discourse. The structure of *Feed*, interspersed with feedcasts, advertisements, and media snippets, **symbolises** the overwhelming nature of constant digital input. These interruptions, such as "Try new Supreme Mega-Tastes with NutrientSpray!" capture the overstimulation experienced by the characters and mimic the reader's own engagement with continuous media. This **fragmented form** represents how external noise disrupts coherent thinking and engagement with reality. Titus's admission, "I was trying to think, but I couldn't stop hearing the jingles," embodies the psychological invasion experienced by individuals unable to separate personal thought from corporate input. Violet's language stands in stark contrast to the slang and abbreviated speech of her peers, demonstrating her resistance to the feed's influence. Her line, "They keep making everything more basic so it will appeal to everyone," uses **repetition** to underscore the simplification of culture and the erosion of intellectual depth. This **contrast** highlights the significant divide between those who are shaped by the feed and those who strive to maintain linguistic richness and individuality. Anderson's depiction of linguistic decline, paired with moments where characters express frustration at their limited vocabulary—"We're raising a nation of idiots"—underscores the novel's critical perspective on the consequences of mediated communication. Through these narrative and linguistic choices, Anderson invites readers to scrutinise their own engagement with technology and media, urging them to preserve thoughtful communication and critical thinking in an era dominated by instant gratification. The novel's portrayal of language as both a tool of conformity and a potential avenue for resistance underscores its thematic depth and relevance.

Conclusion

M.T. Anderson's *Feed* effectively connects ideas, form, and language to critique consumerism, conformity, and the degradation of communication. These connections enrich the novel's significance, making it a compelling reflection on modern society. Anderson's exploration invites readers to consider the value of autonomy and critical awareness in an increasingly media-saturated world.

1149 words

Subheadings have been included to enhance clarity, though they would typically not be part of a formal English essay.

Sample Response Feedback

How the Essay Explains in a Highly Effective Manner How the Connections Between Ideas, Form and Language Have Informed the Understanding of the Significance of the Prescribed Text:

- Demonstrates how Anderson's use of metaphor and satirical form exposes the unattainable pursuit of consumer validation, highlighting the broader implications of consumerism on personal autonomy.
- Analyses the juxtaposition of Violet's articulate speech against the fragmented, superficial language of her peers to emphasise the theme of resistance and the value of maintaining individuality.
- Illustrates how the novel's fragmented structure, filled with feedcasts and advertisements, symbolises the overwhelming nature of media influence, showcasing how this form reflects the erosion of critical thought.
- Highlights how Anderson's integration of colloquial dialogue and fragmented syntax mirrors the impact of technology on communication, prompting readers to reconsider the effects of media on their own language and thought processes.
- Explains how Anderson's portrayal of linguistic decline and resistance invites readers to reflect on their susceptibility to media influence and the importance of preserving intellectual depth.

How the Essay Presents a Highly Effective Response Using Relevant, Detailed References to the Prescribed Text:

- References Titus's metaphorical statement, "It was like I kept buying these things to be cool, but cool was always flying just ahead of me," to demonstrate the insatiable nature of consumerism.
- Cites Violet's assertion, "I'm not going to let them catalog me. I'm going to become invisible," as an example of her defiance and resistance to corporate control.
- Utilises the recurring motif of lesions, with phrases like "Now that lesions are 'brag.' Now that they're the spit. It's huge," to illustrate how consumerism distorts societal values.
- Includes the line, "We're raising a nation of idiots," to support the argument about the degradation of intellectual engagement in a media-saturated society.
- Incorporates Titus's internal conflict through his reflection, "The only thing worse than the thought it may all come tumbling down is the thought that we may go on like this forever," to underscore the emotional complexity of resisting conformity.

How the Essay Organises, Develops, and Expresses Ideas Effectively Using Language Appropriate to Audience, Purpose and Form:

- Organises each body paragraph around a clear topic sentence that links back to the essay question, ensuring a coherent and structured response.
- Uses sophisticated vocabulary such as "compels," "underscores," and "elucidates" to articulate the analysis effectively and engage an academic audience.
- Develops ideas by integrating multiple language and narrative techniques in each paragraph, demonstrating how Anderson's choices contribute to the significance of the text.
- Maintains an analytical tone throughout, balancing detailed text references with evaluative commentary that links directly to the question.
- Concludes each body paragraph with a link that reinforces the main argument, ensuring that each section contributes to a unified, comprehensive understanding of Feed's themes.